

Midnight Ramblings 1

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Category: Batman
Language: English
Status: In-Progress
Published: 2000-04-25 09:00:00
Updated: 2000-04-25 09:00:00
Packaged: 2016-04-27 16:26:12
Rating: K+
Chapters: 1
Words: 979
Publisher: www.fanfiction.net
Summary: Robin grows up.

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> <meta name="Generator"> "Bruce, we need to talk

Well this is what the natives would call Midnight Ramblings combined with a new (and very nice, might I add) computer. It makes it way too easy to type whatever you want. So as you might have guessed, this is a Batman and Robin story. It isn't necessarily slash (not yet anyway, just a warning), and is strictly PG. Usual disclaimer: DC comics owns these beautiful boys, I just steal them away from time to time to play with. I do NOT make a profit off this, don't plan to. 'Nuff said? Good. Hope you enjoy it and be good kids and cadets!

"If Looks Could Kill"

"Bruce, we need to talk."

The dark-haired man at the mahogany desk glanced up from his paperwork. Worry slipped over his face for a second. Cautiously he asked, "What is it you wanted to talk about? School, or" and his voice naturally dropped, "Business?"

"Actually I wanted to talk to you about that accident with the Joker last week." The young man suddenly developed a fascination with his feet, too embarrassed for a moment to continue. Doggedly, he started again. "Alfred said I should just let it slide, but it has been happening too often lately for me to ignore. And you treat me differently since last week."

Bruce, in his defense, was quick to create an excuse. "Dick, you know I worry about you and when you get hurt pulling stunts like that, you don't help those feelings at all." Bruce stood up and walked over to Dick. "I'm sorry if my worry has caused me to come down a little hard on you, but it is only because I care," he told the boy as he lay a hand on his arm.

Dick pulled away a little too roughly. "That is not what this is about." Dick turned his back on Bruce, and his voice became muffled. "It's about that look you get in your eyes. The one that always shows up right after I barely escape death." Dick whirled back around. "And the sad thing is, I know that look doesn't have anything to do with your concern for me." Dick had a hard time burying the sarcasm in his voice.

Bruce's face grew hard. "Would you mind explaining that last one?"

Dick sighed heavily. "You don't see me when you look at me that way. You see you. You see you before your parents died. It isn't me you're trying to protect. It's your childhood. You think that if you can save me from any hurt or pain, you can bury your own." Dick laughed mercilessly, shaking his head. "Hate to break this to you, Bruce, but that plan went south before you even adopted me." Dick's voice grew tighter. "Remember, my parents and a fatal collision with the floor, remember? It must have been like *deja vu* for you. Another innocent family destroyed right before your eyes."

The "Stop" that resulted wasn't a request. Bruce's face had gotten that carefully blank look that meant he wasn't going to let you know that you were getting to him. And his voice was growing more and more like the one he used as Batman.

But Dick was too far-gone to stop. "No, I will not. You need to hear this Bruce. I need to tell you this. 'Cause I could handle the overprotective bit if you really meant it, but you don't, not completely. This is all about you and you pushing your problem onto me," Dick accused him. He started to pace in front of the desk. "You can't treat me like a real person because you don't see me, you see a smaller, younger version of you, someone who needs protecting. I can more than take care of myself and it's about time you recognized that fact." Dick stared straight into Bruce's eyes for the first time that evening. It was a clear challenge to Bruce to dare disagree with him. And to Dick's surprise, Bruce dropped his gaze first.

Bruce tiredly rubbed his hand across his eyes. "Is this leading to something, Dick? Because you have obviously put a lot of thought into this."

"Bruce, I finish college in a few days, and I think it's time I moved out on my own." Dick let that little bombshell sink into the sudden silence that had developed.

For the first time that evening, Bruce looked ashamed and hurt. Yet he didn't offer any arguments, just "are you sure?" Bruce held himself very still waiting for the answer.

"Yeah Bruce, I really think this is what needs to be done. I mean you have been great to me, but I think it's pretty obvious we both need this." Dick sighed again. He seemed to be doing a lot of that lately. "I am truly sorry, but Bruce, I can't live in your shadow and your world anymore. At least, not without losing me. I can't."

Bruce remained where he had since this talk had begun, his fingers rubbing the hard edge of the antique desk. "Is there anything else, because I have a lot of paperwork to finish."

Dick sucked in a quick breath. Oh that had hurt. "Damn Bruce, you can be really cold sometimes, you know that." Before he could say anything else, he turned on his heel and headed for the door, seething.

"Dick?" Bruce's voice called softly. Dick paused, but didn't turn around. "Can we talk about this later?"

Dick's laugh had a hard edge to it. "Sure Bruce, whatever you say." Then he walked out. He didn't turn around once.

End
file.